

# Challenges in the College English Online Teaching and Its Countermeasures

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**Abstract**—College English online teaching is the mainstream and development trend of modern college English education. Although most colleges have started in the construction of college English online teaching, there are still many problems in the implementation of it, and some problems are difficult to solve and have existed for many years. In this regard, we must further improve the practicality of college English online teaching, and further explore the value of college English online teaching in the process of talent cultivation.

**Keywords**—college English; online teaching; implementation; challenge; countermeasure

## I. INTRODUCTION

Under the background of rapid development of information technology and big data technology, the traditional teaching mode of college English has gradually been unable to meet the requirements of talent cultivation and the times. The combination of the Internet and college English teaching has become the development trend of English teaching in this era. On the other hand, there are also many technical problems and difficulties in the college English online teaching. Modern technologies brought not only opportunities but also challenges to the college English teaching. How to meet the requirements of the times and development trends as well as continuously improve the quality of college English teaching has become a problem that college English teachers, educators and network technology experts must think about.

## II. CHALLENGES IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF COLLEGE ENGLISH ONLINE TEACHING

### A. Incomplete Hardware Equipment

The first major challenge in the implementation of college English online teaching is the shortage of hardware equipment. According to the requirements of the Ministry of Education on the teaching of college English courses, online teaching is a necessary approach to implement modern college English education. However, many universities and English teachers simply understand online teaching as some surface initiatives such as network hardware equipment procurement, establishment of the network center, and campus network access. In fact, there are very high requirements for network technologies and hardware equipment in college English online teaching.

However, in reality, the online English teaching devices in many universities have not been updated for many years, the hardware configuration of computers is low, the external devices are aging, the network speed is slow, and the host and extensions often crash. The projector connected to the computer malfunctions from time to time and the projections are often unclear. Such phenomena and problems have directly dampened the interest of college students in learning English with multimedia devices, which has seriously hindered the realization of college English teaching goals.

### B. Low Quality of College English Teachers' Courseware

For a long time, college English teachers, like many teachers in other subjects, have used the courseware, or called PPT, to teach lessons in class. The advantages of using the courseware in teaching are obvious. The courseware can combine knowledge carriers such as videos, audios, images and texts, which is conducive to optimizing the teaching environment, enriching teaching content, stimulating students' interest in learning, and improving teaching effects. But there are also shortcomings about the courseware that cannot be ignored. The current courseware used in college English teaching is often not produced by the teachers themselves, but the teaching software that is provided together with the teaching materials by the publishers. These teaching materials and software can not be updated in time, and their contents and forms have been outdated and obsolete.

The courseware produced by the teachers themselves is only used to cope with the teaching inspections. In addition to the simple copying and pasting of the texts and pictures, there is basically no elaborate design in the courseware. Or, the teacher himself has elaborately made the courseware, but he has paid too much attention to the form of the courseware. The elements of video, audio and picture are stacked in the courseware, leading to the dazzling animation effects, bright colors and fancy form of the courseware. This kind of courseware seems to be more sophisticated than the former courseware in the coping style, but it has exactly ignored one of the most basic principles in courseware making, that is, the purpose of using courseware is not to let students only focus on the form of courseware, but to enable students to keep up with teachers' teaching and understand the knowledge through the courseware. This type of courseware obviously does not achieve such a purpose. It can only distract the students' attention, making it difficult for students to concentrate on the

knowledge, so that their English learning effects will be greatly reduced.

### *C. Teachers' Uneven Awareness and Abilities to Apply the Online Teaching Method*

Today's college English teachers are no longer the traditional teachers with single professional knowledge and ability, but the comprehensive talents with not only solid English professional knowledge and skills, but also professional knowledge about pedagogy, ethics, psychology, sociology, logic, literature and aesthetics. And the teachers need to have the online teaching awareness and application skills in the current era. However, in most cases, the majority of college English teachers have majored in the liberal arts in college. They are only able to use the computer and Internet for daily communication and use and are not good at making in-depth application of the computer and Internet to their teaching of English. In modern society, traditional things are not all useless, but we cannot just adhere to the traditions and reject modern technologies. The traditional teaching method of college English pays attention to the foundation of language, but it makes less improvement in the application of language. Online teaching can make up for such shortcomings, but the premise is that college English teachers should be good at applying online teaching techniques.

In China, college English teaching has great inheritance with middle school and primary school English teaching. The college English teaching mode is also influenced by the English teaching mode of primary and middle schools. In the context of China's exam-oriented education, the majority of college students, especially the freshmen, are still accustomed to the exam-oriented education in primary and secondary schools, especially the teaching mode of high schools. If college English teachers introduce online teaching models, many college students will have difficulty in adapting to the new modes. Therefore, college English teachers have "taught students in accordance with the situation" and "taught students according to their aptitudes", and continued to apply the cramming, infusion, and simply explaining method of teaching to carry out college English education, not focusing on ability cultivation, inspiring self-study, and thinking training, thus ignoring the requirement to implement online teaching.

### *D. Imperfect Evaluation Mechanism for Online Teaching Effects*

At present, there are two types of quality evaluation mechanisms for university personnel training in China. One is the formative evaluation mechanism and the other is the result-oriented evaluation mechanism. At present, the result-oriented evaluation mechanism is used in almost all levels of education in China to evaluate the effects of talent training. In English teaching, students' final test score is the most important reference for the evaluation of the teaching quality. And the score can even determine the evaluation of students when they are in school and their working conditions after graduation.

The result-oriented evaluation mechanism emphasizes the score too much, and cannot scientifically evaluate the comprehensive ability of students. The utilitarianism of this

evaluation mechanism allows students to study college English only for the passing of exams, the obtaining of higher scores, or the owning of good resumes when graduating. However, the main purpose to learn a language is to communicate with others. The result-oriented evaluation mechanism is not only unable to reflect the purpose of language learning, but also unable to integrate into the overall environment and general trend of online teaching.

However, online teaching of college English is currently implemented in the teaching process in many colleges and universities, but it has not become an important part of the teaching quality evaluation system. For example, the teaching with multimedia does help students improve their language communication skills, but there is not an innovative way to measure this improvement in a formative or results-based evaluation mechanism. The nature of the result-oriented evaluation mechanism determines that it is difficult to achieve the above goal. To make a breakthrough and achieve the above goal, we can only innovate and improve the formative evaluation mechanism and apply it to the evaluation of college English teaching effects.

## III. STRATEGIES FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF COLLEGE ENGLISH ONLINE TEACHING

### *A. Running the Student-oriented Concept Throughout the College English Online Teaching Process*

The student-oriented concept is one of the core concepts of university education in China, and it is the same in college English education. As mentioned above, the purpose of college English education is to improve students' language application skills, and the language application abilities include the specific abilities of listening, speaking, reading, writing and translating. Only by adhering to the students-oriented concept can the colleges and universities cultivate students' above-mentioned abilities scientifically, steadily and sustainably.

This is understood by many college English teachers. Under the conditions of having the network, the method of combining networked classroom teaching and networked self-study after class is often adopted in the teaching of college English. The key to this method is the appropriate guidance of teachers and independent learning of students. Students can have more motivation, better conditions, and more time and energy to conduct self-learning and self-supervising. If the student-oriented concept can be implemented throughout the whole process of college English online teaching, students' self-confidence will be naturally established on the basis of their progress in learning language theories and language skills, and they will form the sustainable English learning habit for their whole life.

### *B. Optimizing the Curriculum According to the Characteristics of Online Teaching*

A major feature of online teaching is that it is open, which aims to enable students to develop language learning and communication skills in a wider space. For non-English majors, College English is a compulsory course, and elective courses related to college English such as Western culture, European

and American tourism, intercultural communication, etc. should be offered to provide the students with personalized curriculum options. Teachers of the college English compulsory courses and the elective courses can know about the teaching process, content and evaluation system of each other through the Internet, and carry out independent and closely related classroom teaching in order to develop students' language knowledge and application abilities. In this way, college students with different professional backgrounds, different English proficiency, and different learning goals can always find necessary and sufficient learning contents, knowledge points, and ability points that they are interested in when studying college English, and voluntarily and consciously cultivate their own English abilities and turn the knowledge into the application abilities.

#### *C. Further Improving the Online Teaching Mode of College English*

The college English online teaching model is based on the constructivism of online education. This theory was first proposed by Swiss educator and psychologist Piaget in the 1960s, and the constructivism mainly focuses on the interaction between learners and the learning environment. Specifically, it emphasizes the identity of learners. They are not just recipients and instilled objects of knowledge and information, but processors of knowledge and information with self-perception, self-exploration, and self-thinking. The constructivism of online education involves many disciplines such as linguistics, communication, computational science, psychology, and education, which is very much inclusive and diversified.

According to the above theory, the construction of college English online teaching mode should mainly focus on the environmental resilience for students to learn college English, focus on the autonomy and individualization of students to learn English in this environment. To further improve the existing college English online teaching model, it is necessary to uphold the basic principles of graded teaching and classified guidance. In China, the differences between the millions of students in thousands of colleges and universities in their English language foundation, knowledge and abilities are significant. It is impossible to apply the same textbooks, the same starting point of courses, the same teaching model, and the same set of evaluation standards to organize teaching for them.

#### *D. Vigorously Improving the Network Technology Application Ability of College English Teachers*

No matter in which era, with which technology, and in which type of teaching mode, teachers always play the leading role in implementing education. College English online teaching is not only a teaching method and means, but also a teaching concept. The information age and the Internet age have become the labels of today's society. University teachers, including the English teachers, must conform to the trend of the times, update their teaching concepts, and meet higher requirements. In view of this, college English teachers should pay attention to and actively participate in the training of network teaching technologies, information application

technologies, etc., and integrate the network teaching into the existing open teaching concept, student text concept, teacher guiding value concept, lifelong education concept, etc. . For university administrators, it is necessary to strengthen the training of teachers' modern educational technology application ability. It is also necessary to establish the encouragement and guidance mechanisms to encourage teachers to actively take actions and make innovations in online teaching and actively understand, learn, master network teaching technologies and improve the production of courseware. Comprehensive universities can make use of their own advantages to organize computer teachers and pedagogical experts to conduct interactive communication and guidance for college English teachers who are mainly with the professional backgrounds of liberal arts, to help the latter develop software, produce courseware, and design their online teaching.

#### IV. CONCLUSION

Modern network technology has penetrated into every aspect of people's lives, and college English teaching can no longer return to the past mode without network technologies. Compared to the traditional teaching, the online teaching has obvious advantages. It makes the originally boring classes interesting, and students who have learned English passively have more initiative in learning through the network technologies. At the same time, college English online teaching also provides the correct direction for the teachers to improve themselves. Therefore, although the implementation of college English online teaching still faces many difficulties, as long as we keep following the pace of the times, holding the correct teaching reform and innovation concept, and being open-minded to the technological progress, all the problems and obstacles can be overcome one by one.

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